

It is my pleasure to commend Mrs. Andrianna Ferri on this great accomplishment. I praise her for a long life filled with generosity and caring for the well-being of others. I am honored to represent Mrs. Ferri in Congress. I wish her many more years of joy and happiness.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF  
COLONEL JOSEPH P. RICHARDS,  
USMC

**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 20, 2011*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Joseph P. Richards, Commander, Marine Aviation Training Support Group 21, upon his retirement after more than 31 years of faithful and dedicated service to the United States Marine Corps.

Colonel Richards' long and distinguished career has been marked by his selfless dedication to duty and his unwavering love of country. He enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve in 1980 and trained as an aircraft mechanic. Colonel Richards attended Westfield State College as a Criminal Justice major, graduating in 1985 before embarking on his career as a commissioned officer and Naval Aviator.

During his remarkable career, Colonel Richards served in a number of flying squadrons, deploying overseas with the 13th, 15th, 31st, and 24th Marine Expeditionary Units. On one such deployment, he participated in Operations Allied Force and Noble Anvil, supporting the air campaign over Yugoslavia in 1999. In addition to his operational experience, he has also served in a number of training billets, instructing new pilots and teaching officers at senior level schools. His record of accomplishment is well-documented and earned him command opportunities at every level from detachment to group.

Colonel Richards has served as Commander of Marine Aviation Training Support Group at Naval Air Station Pensacola since May 2009. His leadership and professionalism during his tenure have been nothing short of superb.

Colonel Richards' professional achievements have been rewarded on numerous occasions during his career. His personal decorations include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, two Meritorious Service Medals, two Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals, two Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, and various campaign and service medals.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the career and accomplishments of Colonel Joseph P. Richards. His service to country and Corps has been exceptional. My wife Vicki and I wish him, his wife Susan, and three children—Matthew, Michael, and Meghan—all the best.

WELCOMING THE ORLANDO DEANERY  
BOYCHOIR AND GIRLS  
CHOIR TO WASHINGTON, DC

**HON. DANIEL WEBSTER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 20, 2011*

Mr. WEBSTER. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to welcome the Orlando Deanery Boychoir and Girls Choir to Washington, DC. An outreach ministry of the Cathedral of St. Luke in Orlando, the choirs are founded on European models and affiliated with the Royal School of Church Music in England. Students participating in the choirs develop the ability to create beautiful music and learn teamwork, professionalism, and respect for other cultures.

As representatives of Central Florida, the choirs serve our community, nation, and world. In addition to frequently performing in the greater Orlando area, the choirs have toured venues in the United States including Carnegie Hall, and abroad in many countries, such as Canada, Austria, Japan, and the Czech Republic.

Recently, the President Barack Obama recognized the choirs' talent and invited them to perform at the White House on Tuesday, December 20, 2011. The parents and directors of these choirs should be pleased with these exemplary students due to the discipline and dedication required to achieve this level of recognition.

On behalf of the citizens of Florida's 8th Congressional District, I am pleased to recognize the Orlando Deanery Boychoir and Girls Choir and congratulate the students for their hard work and accomplishment.

RECOGNIZING RETIRED SERGEANT  
ELISHA LANGDON II FOR HIS  
CONTRIBUTIONS AND SERVICE  
TO COMMUNITY AND COUNTRY

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 20, 2011*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable veteran, Retired Sergeant Elisha Langdon II. Mr. Langdon is a lifelong resident of the Mississippi Delta.

Sergeant Langdon was drafted to serve in United States Army after graduating from Alcorn High School. Sgt. Langdon served during the time of the World War II. While serving our great country, he spearheaded a protest letter to General Douglas MacArthur, Commander of the 8th Army, President Harry S. Truman, and the U.S. Department of Armed Services to abolish segregated armed services in the United States and overseas.

As a result of Mr. Langdon taking a stance against segregation, President Truman, prior to the Korean War issued Executive Order #9981 establishing equality of treatment and opportunity in the Armed Services for people of all races, religions, and national origins. This brought about the abolishment of all-black units in the United States.

Sergeant Langdon earned the rank of Sergeant and an Honorable Discharge after his tour of duty. Upon completion of his tour of

duty, he returned to the Mississippi Delta to continue his education at Alcorn State College in Lorman, Mississippi where in 1951 he received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Vocational Agriculture, and then on to Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama where he received a Masters of Education in Vocational Agriculture.

Sergeant Langdon has broken many racial barriers. He became the first African American employed with the USDA Farmers Home Administration in Tunica, Mississippi, and in 1978 he was appointed as an United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Counselor, serving seven southern states and the island of Puerto Rico.

In 1989, Sgt. Langdon was also the first African American elected to the City of Ruleville's Board of Alderman. Mr. Langdon is married to late Ms. Everett Wims-Langdon and proud parents of one child.

Mr. Speaker, please join me and our colleagues in recognizing Retired Sergeant Elisha Langdon II for his dedication to serving our great country.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FROM  
YOU CUT: SAVES UP TO \$1.2 BILLION  
OVER TEN YEARS

**HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 20, 2011*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, the federal government collects fees from coal mining companies to restore abandoned mining sites. Money from those fees is paid to states to restore abandoned mines within their state. However, several states have successfully restored all of their abandoned mining sites and now are permitted to use the federal mine cleanup payments for anything they want to spend it on. Effectively, for the states that have been "certified" as having successfully restored critical mining sites, the mine payments serve as an unrestricted federal subsidy. Several tribal governments also receive payments despite having already remediated all contaminated mining sites on their land. The Obama administration has proposed terminating these mine reclamation payments to states that no longer use them for their intended purpose.\*

FROM THE BUDGET COMMITTEE

Here's suggested text to reform the Abandoned Mine Lands program. It's more narrow than the Administration language that adds on whole bunches of bells and whistles, like advisory boards and councils and a competitive grant component without guaranteeing a net reduction in payments. CBO scored our draft language with an initial estimate of \$1 B. This language was in the Joint Committee's Republican proposal.

\*FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSED BUDGET  
TERMINATION: UNRESTRICTED ABANDONED MINE LANDS  
PAYMENTS

Department of the Interior

The Administration proposes to terminate mandatory payments from the Treasury to States and tribes that have finished restoring their abandoned coal mines. These payments can now be used for any purpose, and therefore do not contribute to the goal of addressing these hazards.